Staff photo by Dennis Hernet

Looking back from the No. 2 (Red) green to tee at Fox Hills

From tee to green

Dadian quips at Fox Hills

By DENNIS HERNET
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There are many people golf fans should have the opportunity to either play a round of golf with or just be close enough during a match to savor the bubbling personality.

You never really know how hard you work at your game and how easy it should really be until you've played with either Pat Patton or Wally Hanson.

And while everyone talks about the antics of Chi Chi Rodriguez and Lee Trevino on the pro circuit, Wisconsin has its own personality in the likes of Archie Dadian, the South Milwaukee insurance man who finished second in the national Publinx tournament last year and will attempt to defend five state golf championships in the near future.

"If everything goes right, I should play about 25 rounds of competitive golf," he said, relaxing between holes during a match on Saturday at the Fox Hills Inn and Country Club at Mishicot. He teammed with Mark Bemowski, the 1975 Wisconsin State Open champion, to battle Bob Swift of Branch River and Kerry Skelton of Fox Hills, the club professionals.

Dadian had a promising future on the pro golf circuit a couple decades ago, but an accident while making a shot left bones in his left hand shattered, surgery corrected the problem but his competitive golf career, at least pro style, was finished.

However, he went on to become one of the truly outstanding state amateurs, having won every tournament on the books, except the State Open, and the only reason he hasn't won that is because it's too pro oriented. And he openly states that when asked for a reason.

But the hand still causes problems.

"I can't tell where the ball is going," he said, standing on the Red No. 5, surveying the fairway which opened up to the right, with an out of bounds on the left. "I don't think I hooked 10 balls last year."

He then proceeded to knock the ball 275 yards up the left side.

"You know, I've lost my depth perception, I can't tell where the green is, I've got to go by the signs," he said, pointing to the big blue 150 yard markers put up for the special charity golf tournament. "Standing about 85 yards from the hole, he walked half way to the green, trying to spot the flag, then knocked a wedge shot right into the hole, for an eagle two. That shot put the amateurs two up.

Bemowski drove off on No. 7, knocking the ball onto the back side of the No. 4 tee, almost pin high on the nearly 400 yard hole.

"This is exhibition, isn't it? Well, isn't it," he blurted out. "Give me the driver!" Throwing caution to the wind, which by the way was at his back at the time. . . and probably not seeing the out of bounds of the left. . . He knocked the ball over the pond, within 30 yards of the green.

When the foursome got up to No. 9, Swift and Dadian started flipping friendly jabs at each other.

"I used to play at Grant Park," Dadian said.

"Yah, I remember people saying you used to get chased off for sneaking on," Swift retorted.

"Never snuch on," Dadian retorted. "The green fees were 15 cents and you got 10 cents off if you had a high school card."

And Dadian said it was Grant Park, a very short, nine hold course that made him the golfer he is today. "I used to work with chipping iron for five hours at a time.

"Now it's my game, especially in match play. If I miss the green, and the other golfer is on, he feels he has two strokes on me. But I can chip to within a foot of the hole and we're all even."

And time and time again Saturday, Dadian did just that.

Dadian is famous for carrying hisown clubs, even in major tournaments.

"I've always had tough luck with Caddies," he said. "In Los Angeles, I still don't know if the caddy I had was a boy or girl . . . very small and hair down to here," he said, slicing the side of his hand into his elbow.

"The bag was bigger than the caddy. . . after five holes I carried the bag, and a couple holes later I carried the caddy too. Bad luck."

On the 16th hole, berating hisown putting, he chirped. . . "Give me a nice 30 footer, I know I can make those. But I can't hit anything under 10 feet."

And then on the final hole, with the match locked up long before that, Dadian, very loose, asked Bemowski if he wanted one of the small signs, which marked the best ball tournament prize winner, pulled and set aside.

"Heck, I'll never hit that," Bemowski joked.

Not further comment is necessary. Bemowski hit it dead on, his ball bounced once, then set right behind the sign, flush against it. . . a complete stymie.

The championships Dadian will be out to defend include the State Two-Man Best Ball with Mike Taylor, The Billy Sixty Best Ball with Jim Lowe, the State Match Play Tournament, the Milwaukee County tournament and the qualifying for the national publinx where he was medalist last year. There are also three more tournaments coming up in June. Archie's a busy man.

While he did profess to starting his game at Grant Park, Dadian now plays out of Ives Grove, a newer 18 hole course, slightly over 7,000 yards. He calls it a good course that's going to be great.

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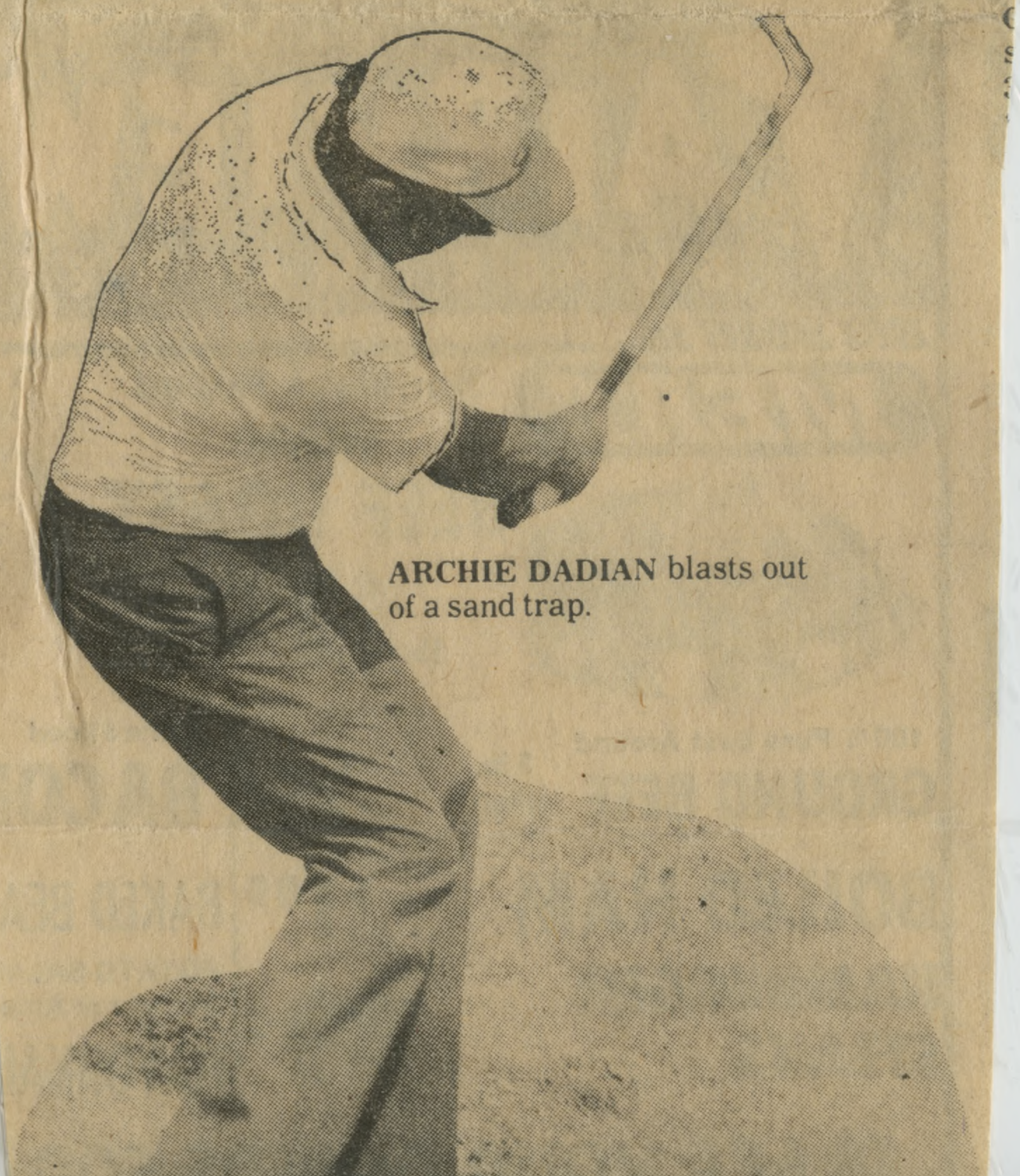

ARCHIE DADIAN blasts out of a sand trap.

Pat Patton or Wally Hanson.

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